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INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

OFFICE

GENEVA

August 1921

Studies and Reports

Series A.

No. 22.

**The
International Congress of Transport
Workers**

Geneva, 18-22 April 1921

The International Transport Workers' Federation, which comprises the organisations of railwaymen, port and dock workers, seamen, tramway employees, and motor drivers, held its Congress at Geneva from 18 to 22 April 1921.

An international conference, having for its principal object the reorganisation of the International Transport Workers' Federation and the re-grouping of its members, was held at Amsterdam on 29 and 30 April 1919. This Conference decided to transfer the secretariat from Berlin to Amsterdam and appointed a provisional committee composed of five members for the main purpose of preparing a new constitution. On the initiative of this provisional committee, a congress was held at Christiania from 15 to 19 March 1920. After the adoption of the draft constitution, the confirmation of the transfer of the headquarters of the Federation to Amsterdam, and the passing of resolutions relating to militarism, the international situation, and the unity of the labour movement, the Christiania congress decided that the next congress should be held at Geneva in April 1921. In addition the International Congress of Railwaymen, held in London on 29 and 30 November 1920 (1), adopted resolutions relating to the 8-hour day, the standardisation of working conditions, wages, holidays, sickness benefit, etc., and the use of automatic couplings.

The membership of the International Transport Workers' Federation, which was only 758,342 on 1 May 1919, increased to 1,889,121 on 31 December 1919 and to 2,713,403 on 31 December 1920.

The following table shows the organisations affiliated to the Federation on 31 December 1920 and their membership according to their official figures.

(1) See International Labour Office *Studies and Reports*, Series A, No. 20.

AUSTRIA	Union of Commercial and Transport Workers and Carmen	52,553
BELGIUM	General Union of Railwaymen	91,944
	Belgian Union of Transport Workers	30,000
	National Union of Railwaymen, Post, Telegraph, and Telephone Workers, and Seamen of Belgium	84,000
CZECHO-SLOVAKIA	Union of Workers in Commerce, Communications, and Transport	10,000
	Union of Railwaymen of Czechoslovakia	66,598
DENMARK	Transport Workers' Union of Denmark	3,000
FINLAND	Transport Workers' Union of Finland	5,012
FRANCE	National Federation of Railway Workers	100,000
	National Federation of Port, Dock, and Transport Workers	48,000
GERMANY	National Transport Federation	20,000
	German Transport Workers' Union	582,000
	German Railwaymen's Union	503,000
GREAT BRITAIN	National Transport Workers' Federation	400,000
	National Union of Railwaymen	470,000
	National Union of Communications and Transport	25,000
IRELAND	Irish Transport Workers' Union	15,000
JUGO-SLAVIA	Union of Railwaymen of Jugo-Slavia	27,000
LUXEMBURG	National Federation of Railwaymen of Luxembourg	6,700
NETHERLANDS	Central Union of Transport Workers	20,550
	Netherlands Transport Workers' Federation	9,000
	Netherlands Union of Rail and Tramwaymen	20,784
NORWAY	Norwegian Transport Workers' Union	10,000
	Norwegian Stewards' Union	2,000
	Norwegian Union of Railwaymen	8,950
	Norwegian Union of Locomotive Engineers	1,699
	Norwegian Union of Seamen and Stokers	5,000
SWEDEN	Swedish Transport Workers' Union	13,179
SWITZERLAND	Swedish Union of Railwaymen	39,554
	Federation of Commercial, Transport, and Food Workers of Switzerland	2,880
	Federation of Railwaymen of Switzerland	40,000
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP		2,713,403

Since 1 January 1921 the following organisations have applied for affiliation:

Railwaymen... { BULGARIA
DENMARK
SPAIN
HUNGARY
Transport Workers... HUNGARY

During 1920 negotiations took place between the Executive Committee of the International Transport Workers' Federation and the secretariat of the International Seafarers' Federation, whose President is Mr. Havelock Wilson of Great Britain, with a view to an understanding between the two organisations, but these negotiations produced no result. It was intended that further interview should take place at the International Congress of Geneva in April 1921, but the International Seafarers' Federation sent no representative.

AGENDA OF THE CONGRESS

The following agenda had been prepared:

Opening address by the President of the Federation.

Election of the Bureau to act during the Congress.

Examination of credentials.

Drawing up of the agenda.

Report on the activities of the Executive Committee.

Financial report.

Proposals submitted.

Headquarters of the Federation.

Selection of the countries the representatives of which shall form the General Council and the Executive Committee of the Federation.

Election of members of the General Council.

Election of members of the Executive Committee.

Designation of the country and city where the next Congress shall be held.

After the verification of credentials, the number of delegates to the Congress was stated to be 75, representing 12 countries and 26 organisations comprising altogether 2,251,591 members.

The following countries were represented: Austria, Belgium, Czecho-Slovakia, Denmark, Great Britain, France, Germany, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland.

The following affiliated organisations regretted their inability to send delegates to the Congress:

the National Transport Workers' Federation of Great Britain;

the organisations of Bulgaria, Spain, Hungary, and Ireland; the Swedish railwaymen;

the British railwaymen, who were detained in their own country owing to the situation produced by the miners' strike.

Mr. Robert WILLIAMS (Great Britain), President of the International Transport Workers' Federation, who was detained by the miners' strike, sent a long letter to the Congress

in which he expressed his views on the policy which should be adopted by the Federation. The following are extracts from this letter:

Our position internationally is that we want more and more to strengthen the ties which bind us in our respective industries. The International Transport Workers' Federation was one of the first industrial secretariats to reorganise itself immediately after the Armistice period. The seamen and dockers and waterside workers of all countries are united as no other industry can be united. Tremendous organising has taken place during the war and since the war, and in most countries our numerical strength has grown enormously. With our additional numerical strength, we naturally have more bargaining powers to obtain from the employing class a higher standard of life.

The International Transport Workers' Federation has, with a considerable measure of success, intervened against efforts to crush the workers' organisations, and especially the transport workers' organisations, in Poland, Finland, Hungary, and other countries. It has pledged itself to help the British miners and transport workers in the present conflict which is taking place in Great Britain. It may be safely said to be the pioneer of the International industrial secretariat. The devastating effects of the Peace Treaties are preventing the normal resumption of trade and the free interchange of commodities, which must be the foundation of an abundance of employment for transport workers. The pursuit of impossible indemnities is paralysing trade and threatens the foundation and edifice of the entire system of private ownership of the means of life.

The seafaring workers of all countries must realise that their proper place is in the International Transport Workers' Federation. In a great seafaring dispute, the active co-operation of the dock and waterside workers, as well as other grades of transport workers, is absolutely essential to them. If a ship is allowed to leave any port, she can only be stopped effectively by the sympathetic action and display of solidarity at the port at which she is to arrive.

We will not admit the right of the seamen's organisation to call upon other sections for their assistance unless these seamen's organisations will take their proper place within the International Transport Workers' Federation. The transport workers of the Allied and neutral nations must make a supreme effort to raise the economic status of the workers in the Central Powers, whose conditions today are well-nigh desperate.

THE OPENING MEETING

Mr. DOERING (Germany), as Chairman, opened the congress in the name of the General Council.

The German delegate declared that this congress must prove that the International Transport Workers' Federation was ready for the great social struggles which were impending. At the present moment, he said, the employers were watching them and would direct their policy according to the decisions of the congress. The workers were threatened with a reduction of wages, especially in the neutral countries, where there was an ample supply of goods which they were unable to export on account of the exchange. The transport workers would be the first to suffer, and must therefore show their solidarity.

Besides the employers, there were the governments, who were following the discussions of the congress with interest. A permanent influence must be exerted upon them through international organisations. Since the war there had been a series of international conferences; an institution had been created — the International Labour Office; the Genoa Conference had been held for the purpose of introducing the 48-hour week for seamen. The International Labour Office had made all possible efforts, but it had not obtained the results expected on account of the resistance which it had encountered.

There were finally countries in which the transport workers' organisations were very weak; it was the duty of the Federation to join forces with them.

After Mr. MORARD, representing the Swiss Federation of Transport Workers, had welcomed the members in the name of the Swiss organisations, the congress proceeded to the election of the Bureau.

The following officers were elected unanimously:

Chairmen: Mr. Doering (Germany);

Mr. Bidegaray (France);

Mr. Bevin (England).

Tellers: Mr. Nathans (Netherlands);

Mr. Algower (Switzerland).

A committee of three was appointed for the examination of credentials:— Mr. Jochade (Germany), Mr. Lindley (Sweden), and a secretary.

DETERMINATION OF THE AGENDA

On the proposal of the Bureau, a committee of three was appointed to audit the financial report. A resolution was also adopted under which meetings of railwaymen, transport workers, and seamen respectively would sit concurrently for the purpose of examining the resolutions to be discussed. It was further decided that the representatives of the countries in which the exchange was 50 per cent. below par at Amsterdam should appoint a committee to consider the amount of the subscriptions to be paid to the International Transport Workers' Federation.

The discussion of the resolutions, submitted by the Executive Committee and the affiliated organisations was then opened.

Militarism and Imperialism

In the name of the Executive Committee, Mr. FIMMEN (Holland), Secretary of the Federation, submitted a resolution against militarism and imperialism. He reminded the

congress that the war had shown the necessity of more and more extensive trade union action. A resolution had been passed at the congress of Christiania by which the Federation adopted a position hostile to all militarist action; the present congress should confirm that resolution.

Mr. Fimmen described the condition of the working classes in Hungary, Finland, France, Roumania, Bulgaria, Jugo-Slavia, and the Balkans, and re-traced the action of the Federation to assist the organisations of those countries.

On the proposal of Mr. SCHUMANN (Germany) the congress passed without discussion the resolution of the Executive Committee, endorsing the action of the Secretariat and the Executive Committee, and giving the Secretariat, the Executive Committee, and the General Council authority to undertake all necessary action against militarism.

A proposal, advocated by Mr. Fimmen, to vote a sum of 10,000 florins for the propaganda of the Federation was next adopted, in spite of the opposition of Mr. Lindley (Sweden) and Mr. Bevin (Great Britain).

SECOND DAY

Chairman : Mr. Bidegaray (France)

The congress immediately resumed the discussion of the items on the agenda.

International Co-operation

A resolution in the following terms was submitted by the Executive Committee.

That the congress, in consideration of the struggle which the working class has to conduct nationally and above all internationally against reaction throughout the world, and in order to secure the greatest possible co-operation between existing international organisations, expresses itself in favour of the formation of a working agreement between the International Transport Workers' Federation and the International Miners' Federation and authorises the Executive Committee of the International Transport Workers' Federation to take steps for the fulfilment of this object by entering into negotiations with the Executive of the International Miners' Federation.

Any agreement entered into shall be reported to the affiliated organisations and to the meeting of the next Congress.

Mr. FIMMEN asked for a unanimous vote on this resolution, pointing out that it was not enough, for the purposes of action against militarism, to refuse to transport troops and munitions, but that it was also necessary to make an agreement with the miners' International with a view to common action.

Mr. TOULOUSE (France) considered that the Transport Workers' Federation should come to an understanding not only with the miners but with all the federations through the medium of the International Federation of Trade Unions at Amsterdam.

Mr. BIDEGARAY having stated that agreements would afterwards be concluded with the other organisations, the resolution was passed unanimously.

A Delegate from Moscow

The chairman read credentials given by the Provisional International Council of Trade Unions of Moscow to an Irish Communist, Mr. Murphy, to attend the congress. Mr. RUDOLPH (Germany) and Mr. COTTER (Great Britain) pointed out that the delegate from Moscow had not been invited and declared themselves opposed to hearing him. The Congress decided unanimously, with the exception of two votes, not to hear the delegate from Moscow.

Social Ownership of the Means of Transport

A resolution submitted by the National Transport Workers' Federation of Great Britain was in the following terms :

That this congress of the International Transport Workers' Federation, believing that freedom of transport and communication is essential to the peoples of all countries, hereby declares in favour of the social ownership of the means of transport—road, rail, air, and water—and of the means of production auxiliary there to: provision of light, heat, power, etc. It also declares in favour of joint control by the state or municipality and the workers' organisations of such means of transport and auxiliary productive organisations.

A second resolution submitted by the Netherlands Union of Rail and Tramwaymen demanded that:

...this congress appoint a commission charged with the task of ascertaining whether and how far measures can and ought to be taken with a view to bringing about socialisation of the means of transport in the various countries.

Mr. POLTMAKER (Netherlands) proposed that a committee should consider the question and that a report should be prepared for presentation to a subsequent congress.

Mr. BIDEGARAY proposed that the matter be referred to the General Council of the Federation, which should notify the affiliated organisations and the Trade Union International of Amsterdam and request the International Labour Office to supply the necessary information regarding the systems of transport in operation in the various countries.

The congress adopted the proposal unanimously.

The Peace Treaties

The Executive Committee submitted the following resolution :

That the congress, taking into consideration the wanton destruction of machines and material necessary for production and transport which

has taken place in the application of the Versailles Peace Treaty in the defeated countries, and in consideration of the fact that indefensible economic injury will be caused to the people of all nations through this destruction, expresses its emphatic protest against procedure of this kind on the part of imperialist governments which at present constitute themselves rulers of the world.

Mr. FORSTNER (Austria) spoke in support of this resolution. He declared that he was in favour of the destruction of war material, but that the Allies had destroyed buildings, aeroplanes, and machinery, and not machine guns. In destroying these means of production, injury had been done to the proletariat of the whole world. After four years of destruction this work of death should cease. The resolution, however, only referred to the Treaty of Versailles, whereas there were also the Treaties of St. Germain and Trianon. The resolution should therefore be altered to read "in the application of the Treaties of Peace".

The question of reparations was also becoming more and more critical. There was a possibility of new conflicts and threats of war and the trade union organisations must be prepared to defend the interests of the workers. The Trade Union International had held a conference at Amsterdam on 31 March 1921. The International Transport Workers' Federation should co-operate with it, and Mr. Forstner proposed in conclusion to add to the resolution the following words :

The congress recognises the decisions of the International Federation of Trade Unions of Amsterdam in regard to reconstruction and reparations.

Mr. GUINCHARD (France) remarked that the resolution of the Executive Committee only applied to one country. He was opposed to all acts of destruction, but he wished to know what attitude the German organisations proposed to adopt with regard to the reconstruction of the devastated regions. The organisations of Germany and Austria should bring vigorous pressure to bear upon their governments for the settlement of the question of reparations. He proposed the appointment of a committee to examine the question and prepare amendments to the resolution of the Executive Committee.

Mr. SCHUMANN admitted that the resolution referred to all the Peace Treaties, but on the question of reparations he reminded the congress that the German workers' organisations had already offered to co-operate in the reconstruction of the devastated regions; a scheme had even been prepared for the transport of materials. These proposals had been rejected by the Entente governments. This was easily explained, because the employers did not wish to see German and French labour joining forces. Mr. Schumann declared in conclusion that the German trade unions were still prepared to assist in the reconstruction of the devastated regions.

Mr. BIDEGARAY feared that the question had not been placed in a proper light. He recalled that agreements had been entered into with a view to co-operation. The General Confederation of Labour of France had exercised continual pressure on the French government. The German organisations should do the same as regards the German government.

Mr. SCHUMANN repeated that the German workers had proposed a scheme; he added that their organisations were prepared to go as far as possible, but not beyond a certain limit, for they were bound to consider the interests of the German people. The German Government had itself made proposals which had been rejected by the Allied governments. Behind the French Government were undoubtedly the contractors who wished to make a profit out of the work of reconstruction.

Mr. MALIENS (Belgium) declared that the congress was not called upon to defend this or that formula of the governments. They must adopt a positive policy to rebuild a new world. The German workers must exercise all necessary pressure on their Government as to reparations. They had overthrown militarism; they must not allow the German capitalists to escape their responsibilities.

With a view to closing the discussion, Mr. Bidegaray read the following resolution presented by the French delegation :

The congress, taking note of the agreements concluded between the German, French, Belgian, and British national central building organisations under the auspices of the International Federation of Trade Unions for the reconstruction of the devastated regions, calls upon the organisations of the countries concerned to take all necessary steps with their respective governments and in their respective countries to secure that these agreements shall be put into operation at the earliest possible date.

This resolution was unanimously adopted in place of the resolution of the Executive Committee, which was withdrawn.

THIRD DAY

The third day was occupied by committee meetings.

FOURTH DAY

Free Trade

The National Transport Workers' Federation (Great Britain) submitted the following resolution :

That the congress, believing that artificial restrictions by protective tariffs, embargoes, controls, and prohibitions upon the free exchange of commodities between country and country diminish the volume of employment for transport workers, hereby declares in favour of the removal of all such restrictions by the institution of universal free trade, thus promoting the extension of the interchange of commodities, the prevention of artificial monopolies, and the stabilisation of prices, and also removing economic factors making for trade and tariff wars and militarism.

After Mr. Bevin and Mr. Weigl had addressed the congress, the resolution was passed unanimously.

Joint Control

The following resolution was submitted by the Netherlands Union of Rail and Tramwaymen:

That the Secretariat of the International Transport Workers' Federation be instructed to conduct an investigation with the object of ascertaining the extent of co-determination secured by various grades of railway workers in matters affecting conditions of employment and management of the railway systems of various countries, and that affiliated unions be notified of the results thereof.

This was introduced by Mr. Jochade, and passed unanimously.

Subject Races

The following resolution was submitted by the National Transport Workers' Federation of Great Britain.

That the congress congratulates the workers of the "subject races" upon their increasingly manifest desire to embrace trade unionism. It declares that all the efforts of native races in their struggle to emancipate themselves from the domination of imperialism and capitalism must react to the advantage of the workers in Western countries and urges all workers to give these efforts all possible support.

Believing that the raising of the standard of life and status of the lowest-paid workers is necessary for the maintenance of the standard of life of organised labour everywhere, this congress urges all workers to ignore the barriers of race and creed, which are used by the capitalist class to divide the workers and keep them in subjection, and to pledge themselves to do all in their power, while resisting the competition of underpaid Asiatic and coloured labour, to raise the status of the members of the "subject races" and to unite with them for the abolition of class domination throughout the world.

On the motion of Mr. Doering this resolution was adopted.

Agreement between Ships' Officers and Seamen

The Central Union of Transport Workers (Netherlands) submitted the following resolution:

That the congress is of opinion that for the determination of working conditions in international shipping, it is more and more desirable that consultations be held between ships' officers and seamen's organisations.

The congress therefore instructs the Executive Committee to approach the international organisations of ships' officers and, where necessary, the respective national organisations with the object of establishing national and international relations.

On the motion of Mr. Doering this resolution was adopted.

Unification of Working Conditions in Shipping

A resolution to the following effect was submitted by the Central Union of Transport Workers (Netherlands):

That this congress is of opinion that international and uniform working conditions should obtain in international shipping.

It therefore instructs the Executive Committee:

(a) to institute an investigation into the legal obligations of seamen belonging to seafaring nations; to submit a report thereon and to draft a programme and an outline of proposed legislation to be considered at a future conference;

(b) in the foregoing outline of proposed legislation it shall be provided that seamen shall not be liable to imprisonment for violation of ship's articles nor be compelled forcibly to fulfil their engagement;

(c) to enter into negotiations with the international organisation of shipowners and the International Labour Office with the object of introducing the 48-hour working week at sea as well as in port;

(d) to take the necessary steps for the opening of negotiations with the international organisation of shipowners for the introduction of a uniform standard wage;

(e) to institute an enquiry for the formulation of a standard of accommodation on board ship with a minimum of square and cubic space for each member of the ship's crew. For ships to be laid down it shall be prescribed that accommodation for the crew shall be installed either amidships or astern with proper separate mess room, bath and washing accommodation, proper conveniences, sick bay, library space, and adequate lighting. For ships already in commission, transitional measures to be stipulated;

(f) to initiate a movement in favour of a uniform regulation with regard to the minimum and maximum water freeboard and the carrying of deck cargoes; an international legal regulation prescribing the minimum number of qualified seamen to be carried as crew per ship; the stipulation to be made that seven-eighths of the ship's crew must understand the language of the nation under whose colours the ship sails;

(g) to initiate a movement in favour of an international regulation for the adoption of wireless telegraphy on ships carrying a crew of 40 hands or more;

(h) to initiate a movement in favour of indemnification in the event of unemployment and/or destitution caused by shipwreck, in accordance with the decision of the Genoa Conference, and moreover for insurance against sickness, accidents, disablement, and old age.

The reporter, Mr. DOERING, reminded the congress that the International Seafarers' Federation, of which Mr. Havelock Wilson is President, had also occupied itself with this question, and that the same programme had been discussed at the Genoa Conference. The three organisations which have this question under discussion, the International Seafarers' Federation, the International Transport Workers' Federation, and the International Labour Office, should work in co-operation. The Executive Committee of the International Transport Workers' Federation should invite the International Seafarers' Federation to join in discussing this question. The International Seafarers' Federation had shown a desire to approach the Transport Workers' Federation; it was desirable to welcome this and to invite joint discussion. In case of refusal the Executive Committee would prepare a programme itself.

The resolution was passed after M. GUÉNA (France) had taken the opportunity to inform the Congress that the French

Seamen's Federation, in view of the delays of the International Seafarers' Federation in regard to the application of the 48-hour week to all seamen, had withdrawn from that organisation and joined the International Transport Workers' Federation.

Prevention and Treatment of Venereal Diseases

The Central Union of Transport Workers (Netherlands) submitted the following resolution :

That this congress is of opinion that the treatment of seafarers for venereal disease is a matter requiring most urgent attention, and instructs the Executive Committee:

- (a) to initiate a movement in favour of international legislative measures;
- (b) to enter into negotiations with the international organisation of shipowners with the object of giving effect to the recommendations made in the resolution under this heading adopted by the Genoa Conference.

The reporter, Mr. DOERING, recalled that the question had been considered during the Genoa Conference, and proposed that the congress should adopt the text of the resolution passed on that occasion, which was in the following terms:

The International Seamen's Conference, recognising the importance of taking active international measures for the prevention and treatment of venereal diseases in the mercantile marine, desires to urge upon the Health Section of the League of Nations the need for immediate attention to this subject.

They would recommend for special consideration :

- (1) the provision of adequate facilities for the prevention and treatment of venereal diseases at all the principal ports;
- (2) the inclusion of venereal diseases among the conditions for which free drugs and treatment are provided for members of the mercantile marine;
- (3) the dissemination of appropriate information on the subject to seafarers, and especially to those at training establishments;
- (4) the provision of adequate facilities for recreation at all large ports under the administration of joint organisations representative of owners and seafarers.

They desire, in addition, to call the special attention of the International Labour Organisation to the importance of the recommendation concerning facilities for recreation.

The proposal of Mr. Doering was accepted ⁽²⁾.

(2) The International Labour Office, being notified of this resolution in July 1920, entered into communication with the Secretary-General of the League of Nations and the International Office of Public Hygiene with a view to the consideration of this question in common. It was also discussed by the Joint Maritime Commission at its meeting in Geneva on 8 November 1920. This Commission instructed the International Labour Office to institute an immediate enquiry, and to enter into communication on the matter with the governments of all the countries concerned. A draft scheme of organisation was sent by the International Office of

Standardisation of Working Conditions

The following resolution was submitted by the Central Union of Transport Workers (Netherlands):

That this congress is of opinion that movements of dock and waterside workers against their employers are impeded seriously by the fact that shippers, brokers, and shipowners attempt to forward goods, immediately a dispute occurs, through neighbouring and/or foreign ports.

Realising that attempts by labour organisations in the direction of improved working conditions are also thwarted by the allegations of employers that they are not able to keep pace with the competition of neighbouring ports, this difficulty being increased under the present circumstances by the very great differences in the rates of exchange:

recommends the Executive Committee of the International Transport Workers' Federation to convene special conferences of dock and waterside workers of those ports which can be regarded as having special common interests.

Special consideration should be given to self-contained and independent shipping routes and trades, for instance: the Scandinavian and Baltic ports; the British and Continental North Sea ports; the Mediterranean ports; the Atlantic ports; the Southern hemisphere.

The proposer, Mr. Bevin, declared that this resolution raised the whole problem of the international solidarity of the workers. When the port and dock workers of one country were on strike, it should be made impossible for those of neighbouring countries to agree to carry out the work refused by the others. Examples of this kind of thing had been seen in Central Europe when action in favour of the Russian Revolution was proposed. Difficulties especially arose in the case of distant countries such as Canada, Australia, and the Far East.

On the proposal of Mr. Bevin, the congress instructed the Bureau of the Federation to organise a special congress of port and dock workers, to be held in an American town on the Pacific coast.

Before taking the vote on these motions the chairman, Mr. BEVIN, welcomed Mr. Albert Thomas, Director of the International Labour Office, who was present at the meeting, and thanked him for having placed at the disposal of the delegates certain documents for which the International Labour Office had been asked. In reply Mr. Albert THOMAS stated that the International Labour Office would always do its best to supply organisations asking for information with data as complete and accurate as possible.

Public Hygiene to all governments and to the League of Nations. It was decided that the International Labour Office should adopt this scheme, which provides among other things for the establishment in the seaports of all countries of medical centres at which seamen may obtain free medical treatment. The Assembly of the League of Nations, held in November and December 1920, having approved the creation of an international organisation of public health, the Industrial Hygiene Section of the International Labour Office will proceed jointly with that institution in the application of the decisions which have been taken.

FIFTH DAY

Chairman: Mr. Doering (Germany).

The discussion of resolutions was resumed.

The Eight-Hour Day, Labour Legislation and Labour Legislation

The following resolution was submitted by the Swedish Transport Workers' Union:

That in view of the concerted attack made by the organised employers in the transport industry against the revolutionary changes secured by the workers during the war;

this congress of the International Transport Workers' Federation resolves to resist by every means at its disposal any attempt made by the employers to interfere with the 8-hour day and the economic status already established.

The congress instructs the Executive Committee to formulate the following policy to all transport workers' organisations:

(1) the resolute maintenance of the 8-hour day;

(2) the maintenance of the wage rates already established and that standardisation be sought on the higher rates in order to maintain the existing standard of life;

(3) resistance of overtime.

The discussion of all details arising out of the foregoing proposals shall be relegated to the special conference of dock and waterside organisations to meet at Geneva.

The reporter, Mr. Bevin, proposed the substitution of the following resolution:

The congress urges the workers of all countries to resist by all means the attempts of the capitalists to increase the hours of work, or to compel workers to work unnecessary overtime. Workers employed for more than eight hours a day should use every effort to reduce the hours of work. The congress instructs the General Council to do all in their power to abolish overtime. It calls upon the workers of all countries to employ all possible means to combat the increase of hours of work. As regards the reforms already obtained in the social sphere, and increases of wages, the congress calls upon the workers to resist all attempts to wrest from them what they have already obtained and to reduce the advantages which they have gained.

The congress instructs the General Council to institute an enquiry into the working conditions of dockers on the following points:

Hours of work and organisation of labour.

Overtime.

Overtime rates.

Difference between piece-wages and time-wages.

Average output on piece-work.

Differences in wages for unloading, coasting, or ocean-going vessels.

Hourly rates per day.

Guaranteed period of employment.

Proportion between the numbers of regular and auxiliary workers.

Contracts of employment by the job.

Stipulations as to labour conditions: execution of such conditions.

Supervision by trade union representatives.

Mixed committee of employers and employees or state inspectors.

This resolution was adopted in place of that originally submitted.

A resolution recommending the establishment of registration offices for the payment of casual workers in case of unemployment or sickness was also passed on the motion of Mr. Bevin.

Casual Port Workers

The Congress adopted the following resolution submitted by the Central Union of Transport Workers (Netherlands) and reported on by Mr. Bevin.

That the congress is of opinion that measures should be taken in the interest of casual workers whose livelihood depends upon employment at ports, but who are only employed during a part of the year. The congress instructs the Executive Committee to enter into negotiations with the international organisation of employers to introduce measures which conform to the Port Labour Registration Scheme (*Havenreserve*) in vogue at Amsterdam and Rotterdam, to foster the development of such institutions, and to invest them with greater utility for the needs of casual workers than is the case at present in the above-named ports (3).

Internal Organisation of the Federation

The following resolution, submitted by the Netherlands Union of Rail and Tramwaymen, and reported on by Mr. Mahlmann (Belgium), was referred to the General Council:

That the Secretariat of the International Transport Workers' Federation adopt suitable measures for the internal organisation of the various sections provided for by the International Transport Workers' Federation (railway workers, dockers, seamen, etc.), e.g. with regard to forming sub-Bureaux acting under the general supervision of the Secretariat of the International Transport Workers' Federation; the publication of a periodical; exchange of information, etc.

Extension of Internal Organisation of the Federation

The Netherlands Union of Rail and Tramwaymen asked that the congress should express its opinion on the question of admitting organisations of post office, telegraph, and

(3) In the ports of Rotterdam and Amsterdam, a Port Labour Registration Scheme (*Havenreserve*) for the benefit of casual workers is in operation. It was introduced by the employers in consultation with the trade unions. In Rotterdam 6,000 workers are enrolled in the first group of preference men. In Amsterdam the number is 2,000. When unemployed, these receive from the employers a payment amounting to 70 per cent. of the difference between the wage actually earned and the wage agreed upon as the current average wage (at present 30 florins per week). The maximum amount payable is 20 florins per week.

At Rotterdam a thousand workers are placed in the second group. These receive no payment from the employers but are in receipt of benefits from the unemployment fund.

This scheme, moreover, guarantees to permanent men a benefit of 4.50 florins per day, but only up to a maximum of 25 florins per week; to the first group of preference men a sum of 3.50 florins per day, with a maximum of 20 florins per week. These benefits are guaranteed for a period of 26 weeks per year.

telephone employees to the Federation, if desired as a distinct industrial group.

The general secretary of the International Postal Federation, Mr. Ludwig MAIER, who was present at the congress, assured the Transport Workers' Federation of the feeling of solidarity which animated the post office, telegraph, and telephone employees, and undertook to submit the proposal to his organisation with a view to carrying out the desired amalgamation if possible.

Affiliation Fees

The following resolution, submitted by the Executive Committee, was reported on by Mr. Weigl:

The Executive Committee, carrying out the instructions of the Christiania congress, has considered the payment of the affiliation fees in accordance with the relative exchange values of the various currencies.

It reports to the congress at Geneva its inability to determine equitably the payments of the fees from those countries where the currencies have fallen to such an extreme extent and recommends to the congress that all those countries where the exchange rates are at present below 50 per cent. of the current Amsterdam rates shall meet separately and agree among themselves to make such payments as shall equitably discharge their liabilities to the Federation, the Executive Committee to have the power to postpone payments from any organisation under exceptional circumstances.

The reporter advocated that the subscriptions of each country should be regulated by the exchange. After speeches by Messrs. Guinchard and Bevin, the Congress decided that the countries whose exchange had fallen 50 per cent. below the rates of July 1914 must submit for this year only to an increase in their affiliation fees. Austria, Hungary, and Poland are to pay 18 cents (Dutch) at the exchange of July 1914, Germany and Czecho-Slovakia 12 cents at the exchange of July 1914, France, Belgium, and Luxemburg 9 cents at the exchange of July 1914. For all other countries the previous affiliation fee is maintained (6 cents per member per annum).

Unity of Organisation in the International Trade Union Movement

The following resolution was submitted by the Netherlands Union of Rail and Tramwaymen:

That in the case of a country where there are several organisations of transport workers catering for one particular category of transport workers, all of which are affiliated to the International Transport Workers' Federation, such unions shall confer immediately with the object of effecting an amalgamation of forces within their group as early as possible, and, further, that the Executive Committee of the International Transport Workers' Federation be instructed to take, if necessary, the preparatory steps towards bringing about this unity and to help to promote the realisation of same.

The resolution, after having been explained by Mr. Poltmaker (Netherlands) and supported by Messrs. Langkemper and Hof (Netherlands), was referred to the General Council.

Internal Organisation of Trade Unions

The Netherlands Union of Rail and Tramwaymen submitted the following resolution:

That the Executive Committee institute an investigation among transport workers in all countries in respect of the internal structure of their organisations and apprise all affiliated unions of the results of same.

This resolution was moved by Mr. Nathans (Netherlands) and adopted unanimously after the addition of a provision that the Bureau of the International Transport Workers' Federation shall obtain information from the national federations and the International Labour Office, and communicate the results of the enquiry to all transport workers' organisations.

Enquiry into Russian Trade Unions

The following resolution, also submitted by the Netherlands Union of Rail and Tramwaymen, was referred to the General Council:

That this congress instructs the Secretariat of the International Transport Workers' Federation to approach the Russian Union of Transport Workers with a view to investigating whether and how far the Russian trade unions may be regarded as bona-fide trade union organisations, free and independent in their various activities and decisions;

that, furthermore, a report on the results of this investigation be submitted as soon as possible to the organisations affiliated to the International Transport Workers' Federation, in view of the probable affiliation of the Russian Transport Workers' Union to the International Transport Workers' Federation;

and that a report be drawn up on the social and labour conditions of Russian transport workers, about their part in the revolutionary movement in Russia, and finally on the question as to whether and how far the means employed by the Russian working classes may be adopted in countries where social conditions differ from those prevailing in Russia before the Revolution.

International Code of Labour Legislation

The National Transport Workers' Federation of Great Britain submitted the following resolution:

That this congress instructs the General Council to compile a summary of legislation affecting transport workers in the various countries and to prepare a programme of legislative demands, to be submitted at the next congress, which, if approved, is to be pressed simultaneously upon the governments of the respective countries in order that a world code of labour

legislation shall come into operation. The subjects embraced by such programme shall include:

- (a) Workmen's compensation.
- (b) Measures for the prevention of accidents and the protection of health.
- (c) Manning of ships, provision of boats, load line, accommodation for crew, sanitary provision, provision scale, etc.
- (d) Hours of labour, and the employment of young persons.
- (e) Regulations for safety on railways, tramways, and passenger transport generally.
- (f) Regulations regarding use of trailers, lighting, speed, loading, etc. on commercial road transport vehicles.
- (g) Measures for securing continuity of employment and / or maintenance during unemployment or under-employment.
- (h) Provision of payment of wages during sickness; provision of annual holidays with pay.
- (i) Old age pensions.

This resolution was referred to the General Council, with an instruction that it should apply for all necessary information to the national organisations and the International Labour Office.

Prevention of Accidents and Automatic Coupling

During the congress an experiment was carried out at the Cornavin station, Geneva, in the presence of the delegates of the railway workers, in the employment of an automatic coupling appliance on the Boirault system. These demonstrations, which had been accepted in principle at the International Congress of Railwaymen held in London on 29 and 30 November 1920, were carried out by Mr. Bidegaray, general secretary of the French railwaymen's federation (4).

A committee was appointed to prepare a resolution on the question. This resolution was introduced by Mr. Jochade on behalf of the committee, and gave rise to a lively discussion between the French and German delegates.

Mr. SCHEFFEL (Germany), although an advocate of automatic coupling, thought that the congress should not pronounce an opinion until more extensive experiments had been carried out.

Mr. BIDEGARAY declared that the international adoption of the system in question would produce a considerable improvement in labour conditions. The recommendation of the French system did not signify that it must be finally adopted; if a better appliance were produced later, it could be substituted for the French. The safety of the workers was the only factor which ought to be considered.

(4) The appliance in question was the subject of experiments, which lasted for six months, on the State railways in France in 1913. Experiments were made with 7,000 appliances. In 1914, a credit of eight million francs was voted by the Chamber for extending the experiments, but, as a result of the war, this credit has never been employed. At the present time the Boirault appliance is in use on the line from Paris (Invalides) to Versailles.

The following resolution, submitted by the French delegation, was passed unanimously:

In view of the experiments carried out with the automatic coupling appliance on the Boirault system in the Cornavin Station, Geneva, on 20 April 1921, in the presence of the delegates of the railwaymen, the Congress of the International Transport Workers' Federation adopts the proposal of the French delegation for the general employment of an automatic coupling appliance on all railways.

Election of Officers

After adopting without discussion the report presented by Mr. Fimmen on the work of the Executive Committee, the congress proceeded to nominate the countries from which should be selected the delegates to be elected members of the General Council and the Executive Committee of the Federation.

FRANCE and LUXEMBURG	2 delegates
GREAT BRITAIN and IRELAND	2 "
GERMANY	2 "
ITALY	1 delegate
SPAIN and SOUTH AMERICA	1 "
AUSTRIA, HUNGARY, and SWITZERLAND	1 "
CZECHE-SLOVAKIA, POLAND, JUGO-SLAVIA, BULGARIA, and GREECE	1 "
BELGIUM and HOLLAND	1 "
NORWAY, SWEDEN, and FINLAND	1 "

The congress then proceeded to the election of committees. The following were elected:

General Council

Mr. JOCHADE	Railwaymen	Germany
Mr. DOERING	Transport Workers	Great Britain
Mr. WILLIAMS	Transport Workers	Austria
Mr. J. H. THOMAS	Railwaymen	Sweden
Mr. FORSTNER	Transport Workers	France
Mr. LINDLEY	Transport Workers	"
Mr. BIDEGARAY	Railwaymen	
Mr. GUINCHARD	Transport Workers	

Mr. BRODECKY, of Prague, will represent Czecho-Slovakia, Jugo-Slavia, Poland, Greece, and Bulgaria.

Holland and Belgium will agree upon the appointment of a delegate.

Spain will appoint a representative later.

Executive Committee

Messrs. WILLIAMS, DOERING, BIDEGARAY, LINDLEY, FORSTNER.

Mr. Edo FIMMEN was unanimously re-elected Secretary of the Federation.

The headquarters of the Federation were maintained at Amsterdam. It was further decided that the next congress should take place at Vienna in the autumn of 1922.

Before the conclusion of the congress, Mr. Bevin read a telegram from Messrs. Williams and Gosling, requesting the congress, on behalf of the transport organisations of Great Britain, to address an appeal to the American dockers and railwaymen, calling upon them to refuse to load boats carrying coal to Great Britain during the miners' strike. A resolution to this effect was passed unanimously, also an appeal on behalf of the workers of Finland.

Mr. Bidegaray then declared the congress closed.



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